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ABSTRACT

A study determined what variables in the home literary environments of ninth-grade students influenced their attitudes toward reading. Subjects, 316 students from 2 ninth-grade classes at 2 metropolitan high schools, were given the Estes Reading Attitude Scale and a researcher-developed, 30-question inventory of their home literary environment. Results indicated that students' reading attitudes were dependent upon the following variables from the early home literary environment: (1) being read to as a child; (2) being read to by more than one person; (3) public library use; (4) giving books as gifts; (5) parental book collections; (6) personal book collections; (7) subscriptions to magazines; and (8) television restrictions. Results also indicated that the following present-day behaviors were related to positive attitudes toward reading: possession of a library card; discussing books and/or magazines with parents; and discussing books with peers. Findings suggest that the literary environment of the home is an important influence on the attitudes toward reading of ninth-grade students--it is reflected in their participation in reading and reading-related activities, especially library membership, personal book collections, and interaction with peers who value books. (Contains 38 references, and 17 tables and one figure of data. Appendixes present the reading attitude scale, the survey administration script, comments from students, and demographic data in the schools.) (Author/RS)

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME LITERARY ENVIRONMENTS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD READING IN NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS

by

MARY ELLEN KUBIS

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To the memory of Harold R. White, my father.
He was a reader.

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME LITERARY ENVIRONMENTS
AND ATTITUDES TOWARD READING
IN NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS

by

MARY ELLEN KUBIS

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine what variables in the home literary environments of ninth-grade students influenced their attitudes toward reading.

Methods and Procedures

Three hundred sixteen (316) subjects from the ninth-grade classes at two metropolitan high schools were given the Estes Reading Attitude Scale and a researcher-developed, 30-question inventory of their home literary environment. Scores on the two instruments were compared, using chi-square, to identify variables which appeared to influence the students' attitudes toward reading and their present-day, literary behaviors.

Results

The results suggest that the students' reading attitudes were dependent upon the following variables from the early home literary environment: (a) being read to as a child, (b) being read to by more than one person, (c) public library use, (d) giving books as gifts, (e) parental book collections, (f) personal book collections, (f) subscriptions to magazines, and (g) television restrictions.

The following present-day behaviors were also found to be related to positive attitudes toward reading: (a) possession of a library card, (b) discussing books and/or magazines with parents, and (c) having peers with whom one discusses books.

Conclusions

The literary environment of the home is an important influence on the attitudes toward reading of ninth-grade students. It is reflected in their participation in reading and reading-related activities, especially library membership, personal book collections, and interaction with peers who value books.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

"Recreational reading, or rather the lack of it, is a concern of reading educators today. Significantly, one of the greatest problems in reading is that many students do not read for pleasure (Manning & Manning, 1984, p. 375)."

Observation and personal experience have shown that high school students have vastly different expectations of reading. Some young adults look forward to it as a pleasurable activity and with enthusiasm, but far more read only when it is required, and some avoid reading at any cost. When asked why they don't read for pleasure, the standard reasons given are (a) they are too busy and (b) reading is boring (Martin, 1991).

Among high achievers there is a trend away from reading as evidenced by a drop in the top end of the verbal SAT scores across the nation (Martin, 1991). Aliterate students--those with adequate skills who choose not to read--are a newly emerging class of nonreaders, students for whom the traditional motivational activities for reading don't work. According to Beers (1990), they prefer to see the movie, read illustrated books, listen to the teacher read the book, or do related art activities.

The trend in education away from text books and toward a variety of supplemental materials in resource centers puts a heavy burden on the child who does not want to open a book (Hansen, 1976). While an increasing number of

automated information resources may help, a printless school resource center is far from a solution to the problem.

There are some exceptions, however. Busy students with good attitudes toward reading and school who are often high-achievers (Heerman & Seltzer, 1983; White, 1989) still make time to read. They read for pleasure, for the feeling reading brings, and for identification with characters in books, not just to learn facts or seek information (Landy, 1977; Neuman & Prowda, 1982). Often they are students with high self-esteem (Alexander & Filler, 1976; Athey, 1976), especially high academic self-esteem (Landy, 1977).

What makes one student an enthusiastic reader and another a nonreader? Why are some students motivated to find time to read when others won't even try? The affective components of motivation are interests, values, attitudes, and beliefs. Interests determine the direction of a student's actions while values, attitudes, and beliefs determine the degree of liking or disliking (Feather in Duggins, 1987). Since attitudes, once formed, exert strong control over behavior (Woelfel & Haller, 1971), they often are the difference between a student who reads and another who doesn't (Greaney & Hegarty, 1987). Since the home is a major source of attitudes, it may be a very important contributor toward the formation of a positive or negative attitude toward reading (Alexander & Filler, 1976). This study explores the relationship between attitudes toward reading and the home literary environments of ninth-grade students.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine which elements in the home literary environments of ninth grade students most greatly influenced their attitudes toward reading. More specifically, the following areas were investigated:

-was the student read to as a preschooler and by whom?

-did the mother or primary caregiver work during the preschool years?

-does the family use the public library?

-does the family value books as evidenced by giving books as gifts and home libraries?

-do parents show interest in the intellectual development of the child and his reading as evidenced by questions and conversation about school and reading?

-does the family subscribe to periodicals?

-has the child had his own magazine subscriptions?

-do the child's friends enjoy books and talk about them?

-was or is TV viewing restricted or monitored?

-what is the ordinal position of the child in the family?

-what is the educational level of the primary caregiver?

-is there a person in the home whom the child considers a real "reader"

and, finally,

-can the student identify a person or an incident which had a significant effect on the type of reader he or she is today?

Significance of the Study

A child's attitude toward reading is one of the most important predictors of success in school (Freeman and Wasserman, 1987) and may be determined well before the student ever begins kindergarten. A student who has a good attitude toward a subject will be likely to do well in it (Vaughan & Estes, 1986) and few can refute the importance of reading to facilitate learning in all subject areas. Yet, when reading problems develop, the child's attitude is rarely, if ever, investigated by educators.

The fortunate child begins school with a positive attitude toward reading as a result of rich and varied preschool experiences. According to Matheny and Lockledge (1986), when a child enters school with a positive attitude toward reading, the school can do little to change that attitude; it is when a child enters school with a negative attitude that the school has a unique opportunity to influence the reader with appropriate strategies for improving his or her attitude.

If a significant relationship between specific influences in the home environment and positive attitudes toward reading can be determined, opportunities for capitalizing on these influences should be explored. Conversely, if students with poor attitudes toward reading come from homes where the identified factors are absent, they could be identified as students "at risk" and given early assistance, both in school and out.

Hospitals, schools, public libraries and outreach programs might work to foster neighborhood cooperatives and classes through which parents could learn how to interact with their children to establish the best home environment for encouraging a positive approach toward reading and school. Preschool

programs could be restructured to give assistance to willing parents. It's possible that such a movement could defy socioeconomic barriers since, according to Hansen (1976) and Greaney (1981), it matters more what parents do in and with the environment than what the environment actually is.

Students in primary grades would benefit from attitude testing. Less eager students, those who arrive in school without positive attitudes toward reading, could be exposed to "literature-rich" reading classes and given an opportunity to discover that wonderful things are found in books. This approach could potentially move a previously unmotivated child to want to learn to read.

Reading and literature teachers in all grades could benefit by an increased awareness of the role of attitudes in motivating children to learn to read. If students' attitudes toward reading were determined, reading programs could be modified to the benefit each individual student and the group as a whole.

Assumptions

An assumption is made that an attitude scale accurately measures attitudes.

An assumption is made that students answered the questions on the attitude scale honestly. Hammons (1981) did polygraph tests to verify students' answers and found that a significant number of students with poor attitudes toward reading enhanced their responses to seem less negative. Honesty in answering is a factor beyond the control of the researcher.

A survey instrument was completed by students in this study to assess their home literary environment. An assumption is made that they were able to remember what took place at home when they were young. A poll conducted by Gallup and Newport (1991) reported that in a survey sample of 1,019 Americans, 63% of children remembered being read to while 89% of their parents reported reading to them. In addition, this researcher field-tested the survey instrument with her sons. They did not recall their father reading to them as small children when, in fact, he had done almost half of the reading that was regularly done at bedtime.

An assumption is made that students were not feeling pressured to please when completing either the attitude scale or the home literary environment survey.

An assumption is made that the teachers who administered the survey to the students at school Y read the directions from the script, and that the subjects followed the directions.

Limitations

This study is limited to the easily measurable aspects of a child's literary environment. For example, to be a completely accurate representation of the effect a trip to the library would have had on a child's home literary environment and, consequently, his or her attitude toward reading, a researcher would have had to have been on the trip and to have been able to accurately evaluate the interaction between parent, child, and others. Even if such in-depth research were possible, it is beyond the scope of this study.

Definitions

Attitude--a conceptual relationship between one's conception of oneself and one's conception of the object or objects (Woelfel & Haller, 1971. p. 75).

Negative attitude--an attitude reflected by scoring at or below the median on the Estes Reading Attitude Scale. This is an oversimplification but is necessary for discussion purposes.

Positive attitude--an attitude reflected by scoring above the median on the Estes Reading Attitude Scale.

Significant others--those persons who exercise major influence over the attitudes of individuals (Woelfel & Haller, 1971, p. 75). A variety of terms is used to describe the role of parent figures in the life of a child, but, primarily, "mother" and "father." The terms chosen do not suggest a predisposition toward or an endorsement of any particular familial arrangement.

Home--influences outside the school environment.

Literary environment--those aspects in a child's cognitive and affective experiences and in the immediate environment that influence a predisposition toward or against reading and books.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature and Research

> *Few children learn to love books by themselves. Someone has to lure them into the wonderful world of the written word; someone has to show them the way* (Prescott in Trelease, 1985, p 30).

Why should a child want to learn to read? Any study of attitudes is, in reality, a study of motivation (Duggins, 1989) and the role of motivation in early school-related reading is powerful (Hess, Holloway, Price & Dickson, 1982). Attitudes are critical in any learning situation; rarely do we find students to be successful and yet have a negative attitude (Vaughan & Estes, 1986). According to Freeman & Wasserman (1987), even in preschool the difference between students who are motivated and those who are not is obvious. First graders with similar scores who differed in eagerness to learn to read made progress based on their attitudes, nothing else (Athey, 1976).

School alone cannot provide the motivation necessary for children to learn to read and when problems with reading develop, the question of intrinsic motivation should be raised (Freeman & Wasserman, 1987), for while people are not "genetically programmed" to read, they are capable of learning to read if raised in a literate environment (McCracken and McCracken, 1986). Carter and McGinnis in Alexander and Filler (1976) have stated "interests, attitudes,

and points of view of the individual have their origin in the environment"(p. 7). What happens at home can be critical (Karazim, 1987).

Home is an important source of attitudes and the child with a background rich in books will want to learn to read (Freeman & Wasserman, 1987). The following variables in the home environment have been investigated for their impact on a child's attitude toward reading.

Being Read To by Parent or Parents

Bullock in Freeman & Wasserman (1987), the Early Childhood and Literacy Development Committee [ECLDC] (1985), and Iarusso (1989) felt that being read to was a very important component of a rich home literary environment. Vukelich (1984), in a review of the literature, found that "Read to your child" was the suggestion most frequently made by teachers to parents who wanted to have children who enjoyed reading. Hansen (1976) found that children who were most ready to read were read to extensively by parents and older siblings. Landy (1977) reported that 75% of all children in her study had been read to as small children, but, in contrast to the prevalent opinion, she concluded that it did not constitute a significant influence.

Bullock (in Freeman & Wasserman, 1987) added the extra component of a hug, suggesting that reading became even more significant when parent and child were physically touching. McCracken and McCracken believe "children who have been read to and who have had rich experiences with the world about them come to print and the reading of print as naturally as they came to speech" (1986, p. 145).

Athey reported the existence of a "hidden curriculum [which] inculcates expectancy for success" (1976, p. 369) in middle-class homes; Barton in Hansen (1976) related that superior readers and early readers came from homes that belonged to the higher socioeconomic classes. Durkin (1966), and Feldman and Weiner in Hansen (1976) expected to find evidence to support that finding but did not.

Educational Level of Parent(s)

Sheldon and Carrillo (1951) found a significant relationship between parental levels of education and reading levels of children. Smith (1990) has reported that adults with the most education had the most positive attitudes toward reading. Greaney (1986) suggested that the greater the experience parents have had with formal education, the more they prepare their children with appropriate readiness skills, attitudes and values. It is reflected, he concluded, in achievement levels and greater amounts of leisure reading by their children. Results of a poll conducted by Gallup and Newport (1991) reported a significantly higher average number of books read per year by college educated women and men than by their less well-educated counterparts.

Modeling by Parent

Martin (1991) reported that gifted students identified mom as the motivating role model and Landy (1977), while suggesting that both boys and girls were significantly influenced by their same-sex parent's reading habits, reported more significance to male modeling than female. Entwisle in Freeman and Wasserman (1987) proposed that father-child interactions may not be studied as much as mother-child interactions but, in the case of males, may be

more important because of the modeling effect. A significant influence on boys is whether their father reads (Karazim, 1987; Landy, 1977) and it is possible, according to Athey (1976), that boys consider reading a feminine activity, an attitude that may adversely influence their ability to learn to read. A Gallup and Newport poll (1991) showed that women, college educated or not, read more than men.

Role Expectations

According to Landy (1977) there is an apparent modeling of reading behavior after the parent of the same sex. Girls read more than boys (Freeman & Wasserman, 1987; Hansen, 1976) and are more likely to see reading as a pleasurable experience than are boys (Landy, 1977). Women (and most likely then, mothers) read more. In one year surveyed, women read an average of 18 books while men averaged 12; college educated women read an average of 25 books, college educated men, 15 (Gallup & Newport, 1991).

Fathers' feelings that their sons should be doing something more masculine than reading may account for boys' unreadiness for reading (Downing & Thackery in Freeman & Wasserman, 1987) and may be the reason why boys benefit more from kindergarten than girls. Boys find it is acceptable to read and do activities in school that stereotypes would not permit at home (Rubin in Freeman & Wasserman, 1987).

In a study done with high school students in Ohio, Whittemore (1992) found no significant relationship between parents' frequency of reading and the frequency of reading patterns established by their children.

Home Libraries

The availability of reading materials in the home was found by Landy (1977) to be the single most important influence on the reading attitudes of children. As the size of the home library increases, so does the ability of the readers in the home (Sheldon & Carrillo, 1951). ECLDC (1985), Freeman and Wasserman (1987), Hansen (1976), Iarusso (1989), and Vukelich (1984) all have attested to the value of a wide variety of print materials, constantly available, for promoting interest in reading. Athey (1976) suggested that there is a lag in reading acquisition in boys because there is often a lack of reading material suitable for boys in the home.

Library Membership

A significant positive influence relevant to the acquisition of reading skills, according to Hess et al. (1982), was having a mother who checked out books from the public library. Use of the library by a child's mother and siblings was also a valid predictor of reading amount, especially in girls, according to Landy (1977). Greaney and Hegarty (1987) found that 85% of the students in their study who reported enjoying reading and who read the most in their leisure time were library users.

TV Viewing

Neuman and Prowda (1982) found that television viewing was detrimental to children's reading and recommended that it be monitored to avoid excessive viewing. Martin (1991), however, reported that TV viewing was not a factor and that strong readers often watched as much as two hours of television a day but still found time for reading. Landy (1977) determined that

it was less of a negative influence than anticipated, but, while good readers did not consider it a factor in depriving them of reading time, nonreaders thought they might read more were it not for TV.

In their study of the TV viewing habits of preschoolers, Hess et al. (1982) found that hours spent watching "Sesame Street" were significantly helpful to preschoolers, especially when the parent co-viewed the program. Maring (1985) suggested that parents subscribe to the "Sesame Street" magazine for their child to further reinforce learning.

Fetler (1983), reporting on a study of 29,000 nine-year-olds, found that achievement levels of disadvantaged students increased with moderate television viewing while the advantaged student's achievement level decreased; large amounts of TV viewing were more detrimental to the advantaged child than to the disadvantaged child. The effect was that of making their achievement levels more equal.

Size of Family and Birth Order

Sheldon and Carrillo (1951) determined that the smaller the family and the earlier the ordinal position, excepting only children, the greater the percentage of good readers. Gottfried in Greaney (1986) reported that influences may vary for subsequent children within the same family. The first born has more interaction with parents and, consequently, a more intellectually stimulating environment than later siblings.

Competition between siblings was found to be a motivating influence by Steltenkamp (1992), especially when a younger brother or sister was a more proficient reader than an older sibling. Martin (1991) reports that seeing

siblings "smug in their secret talents that identified them as adults" (p. 53) was a motivation to learn to read for younger children in a large family.

Landy (1977) found that good readers come from slightly smaller families but that birth order matters only in that it might influence the number of books the child owns and whether or not a quiet place to read can be found.

Summary

The home literary environment is the most important influence on the literary development and attitude toward reading of the preschool child. Several variables determine the richness of the home literary environment and may include (a) being read to, (b) the socioeconomic level of the family, (c) the educational level of the parents, (d) modeling of reading by the parents and older siblings, (e) role expectations, (f) the presence of a variety of interesting books in the home, (g) visits to the library to borrow books, (h) the quality and amount of television viewed, and (i) the size of the family and birth order of the child.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Procedures

This was a descriptive study using a questionnaire survey methodology. Its purpose was to investigate the effects of the home literary environments of teenagers on their attitudes toward reading. This chapter includes (a) identification of the population of the study, (b) a description of the instruments used, (c) procedures used in collection of the data, and (d) a description of how the data was analyzed.

Population

The participants in the study were 316 ninth-graders from two high schools in the metropolitan Atlanta area. The particular schools were selected because school X was where the researcher worked and school Y served a population whose demographics differed from those of school X.

School X has a population of approximately two thousand students, 90% white, 10% nonwhite; 3% of the students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches. (A family income of no more than $1500 a month qualifies the two children of a family of four for free lunches; $2200 a month is the maximum allowable income for reduced-cost lunches.) Approximately 90% of the students in school X continue their formal education beyond high school. The sample was about 25% of the ninth-grade class.

School Y has a population of approximately eleven-hundred students, 56% white and 46% nonwhite; 21% percent of its students qualify for free or

reduced-cost lunches. Approximately 72% of the students continue their formal education beyond high school. The sampled population of school Y is slightly less than half its ninth-grade class.

Instrumentation

The following survey instruments were completed by the ninth-graders:

(a) The Estes Reading Attitude Scale (Estes, 1971). This survey consists of a 20-item "Likert" or "summated ratings" scale to which the examinee is asked to respond on a one to five point scale, varying from "I strongly agree" to "I strongly disagree." Eight of the statements are positive; twelve are negative. The score on the test represents the student's attitude toward reading. The test has a sixth-grade readability level, its content is appropriate for students in grades three through high school, the validity is substantial (Dulin & Chester, 1974), and it is sensitive to a wide variety of attitude types (see Appendix A).

(b) The Home Literary Environment [HLE] survey is researcher-developed and attempts to establish the literary richness of the environment from which the examinee has come. The subjects were directed to respond by circling the most appropriate answer for each question. Twenty questions require yes/no responses, six questions are multiple choice, and four questions require subjective answers. The responses were assigned values and used for comparison with the attitude score. The survey targeted specific areas:

-was the student read to as a preschooler and by whom?

-did the mother or primary caregiver work during the preschool years?

-does the family use the public library?

-does the family value books as evidenced by giving books as gifts and home libraries?

-do parents show interest in the intellectual development of the child and his reading as evidenced by questions and conversation about school and reading?

-does the family subscribe to periodicals?

-do the child's friends enjoy books and talk about them?

-was or is TV viewing restricted or monitored?

-what is the ordinal position of the child in the family?

-what is the educational level of the primary caregiver?

-is there a person in the home whom the child considers a real "reader" and, finally,

-can the student identify a person or an incident that had a significant effect on the type of reader he or she is today?

There are individual studies which explore the significance of several variables mentioned above and other researchers have explored additional influences but, to the researcher's knowledge, there is not another study that attempts to consider all the above, in survey form, as part of the home literary environment.

The survey instruments and instruction script were field-tested on four classes of students in school X: two Freshman English classes which typified the population of the study and two Advanced Learning Program (ALP) classes

of seniors for suggestions. As a result of the field test, two of the statements on the Estes Reading Scale were reworded.

"Reading turns me on." (#7) was changed to "Reading is great!"

"Reading is only for grade grubbers." (#8) was changed to "Reading is only for kids who will do anything to get a good grade."

At the administration of the survey instrument all students were advised of the anonymous nature of the study and told that they need not complete the survey if they were at all hesitant. Very few chose not to participate in the study.

Data Collection

Collection of appropriate data depended on successful completion of both the Attitude Scale and the HLE Survey. At school X, surveys were administered by the researcher to four Freshman English classes (approximately 100 randomly placed students), four Developmental Psychology classes (approximately 65 advanced students), and five team-taught Freshman English classes (43 students). This selection allowed a sampling of students of all ability levels.

The Attitude Scale and HLE Survey were originally designed as separate surveys and administered several weeks apart in school X . Because it was necessary to pair the surveys and because anonymity was desired, respondents were asked to place the last two letters of their last name plus their birth date on the back of each survey. Because of inconsistencies and absences, successful student completion of both surveys and the subsequent matching-up was possible with fewer than originally hoped. The initial distribution was to 208 students;

the number of surveys successfully paired, scored, and consequently usable was 150.

After completion of the surveys at school X, surveys were sent to school Y where two helpful media specialists arranged to survey classes similar to those in school X. The surveys were administered by classroom teachers who read scripted instructions (see Appendix B) to an identical mix of classes: Freshman English, both regular and team-taught, and Developmental Psychology.

Because of the poor return rate at school X, the two surveys were combined for distribution at school Y. The change resulted in an improved rate of return and yielded 166 successfully completed surveys from school Y. The combined surveys from school X and school Y numbered 316.

Data Analysis

The surveys were hand-scored by the researcher and the responses from the attitude scale and HLE survey were entered into a word processor and stored on disk. With the help of consultants at the Georgia State University Research Department using Statistical Package in Social Science software, the data were coded, compared, and analyzed for significance. The chi-square test of independence was used to determine whether there were significant relationships between variables in the students' home literary environments and their scores on the attitude scale; t-tests were used to determine if there were significant differences in the number of periodicals received by each group. The data presented are the combined results, split at the median, and referred to as the "positive" and "negative" groups for discussion purposes.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The purpose of the study was to determine what variables in ninth grade students' home literary environments have influenced their attitudes toward reading. Twelve general areas were investigated.

An attitude survey and an inventory of factors in the home literary environment were administered to 377 ninth graders in two high schools. After collection, collation and scoring, 316 surveys were suitable for analysis. Not all questions were answered by all respondents.

The possible scores on the attitude scale range from 20 to 100; the actual scores ranged from 31 to 100. These scores were the criteria by which the respondents were divided at the median into two groups. For discussion purposes, students with scores above the median are referred to as those with positive attitudes or the "positive" group; students who scored on or below the median are referred to as the "negative" group.

Scores on the Estes Attitude Scale were compared statistically to the responses on the HLE survey to determine if there were relationships between factors in the students' home literary environments and their attitudes toward reading.

The data from each school were analyzed separately using a median split (see Table 1). The data from the two schools were then combined and the same statistical treatment applied. The results of the analysis of the combined scores,

split at the median, are presented for each area that appeared on the HLE survey (see Table 2).

Table 1

Median Splits and Score Ranges

School X N = 150			
Group	F	%	Score Ranges
Positive	76	50.7	72 - 100
Negative	74	49.3	36 - 71
School Y N = 166			
Group	F	%	Score Ranges
Positive	83	50	71 - 100
Negative	83	50	31 - 70

Table 2

Median Splits and Score Ranges

Combined Data N = 316			
Group	F	%	Score Ranges
Positive	159	50.3	71 - 100
Negative	157	49.7	31 - 70

HLE Question 1.

Chi-square findings for the relationship between having been read to as a child and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .02 level ($x^2 = 8.00$, df = 2). See Table 3.

Table 3

Were You Read to As a Child?

Group	F	%	F	%	F	%
N = 311	Never		Sometimes		Often	
Positive	11	7	63	40	83	53
Negative	10	6	86	56	58	38

HLE Question 2.

The question sought to determine if there was a relationship between being read to by a particular person (mother, father, siblings, grandparents, others, or a combination of people) and having a positive attitude toward reading. There was no indication of a relationship.

HLE Question 3.

Chi-square findings for a relationship between having been read to by more than one person when one was a child and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .05 level ($x^2 = 4.61$, df = 1). See Table 4.

Table 4

Did More Than One Read to You?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 314	No		Yes	
Positive	71	45	88	55
Negative	88	57	67	43

HLE Question 4.

There was no apparent relationship between having a parent who did not work and having a positive attitude toward reading.

HLE Question 5.

Chi-square findings for the relationship between visits to the public library when respondents were young and having positive attitudes toward reading were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 8.96$, df = 1). Eighty-three percent (83%) of the students with positive attitudes remembered visiting the public library when they were young (see Table 5).

Table 5

Did You Visit the Library?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 315	No		Yes	
Positive	27	17	132	83
Negative	49	31	107	69

HLE Question 6.

Attendance at specific story hours or other library programs did not appear to have a significant relationship to scoring above the median on the attitude scale.

HLE Question 7.

Chi-square findings for the relationship between possessing a library card and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 8.50$, df = 1). See Table 6.

Table 6

Do You Presently Have a Library Card?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 313	No		Yes	
Positive	35	22	123	78
Negative	58	37	98	63

HLE Question 8.

In families where books are given as gifts, one is significantly more apt to find students with positive attitudes toward reading. Chi-square findings for the relationship between book-giving and a positive score were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 32.43$, df = 1). See Table 7.

Table 7

Do You Give Books As Gifts?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 314	No		Yes	
Positive	43	27	114	73
Negative	93	59	64	41

HLE Question 9.

Chi-square findings for the relationship between having parents with collections of books in the home and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 13.77$, df = 1). See Table 8.

Table 8

Do Your Parents Have Books at Home?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 316	No		Yes	
Positive	16	10	143	90
Negative	41	26	116	74

HLE Question 10.

Personal home libraries were characteristic of 78% of respondents who scored above the median but only 49% of those who scored below the median. Chi-square findings for the relationship between having personal collections and

having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level (x^2 = 28.6, df = 1). See Table 9.

Table 9

Do You Have a Personal Library?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 316	No		Yes	
Positive	35	22	124	78
Negative	80	51	77	49

HLE Question 11.

There was no apparent relationship between parents showing interest in what their children read and their children scoring above the median on the attitude scale.

HLE Question 12.

There was no apparent relationship between parents who ask their children what they have learned in school and children who have positive attitudes toward reading.

HLE Question 13.

Chi-square findings for the relationship between having an interest in discussing books or magazines with parents and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level (x^2 = 20.48, df = 1). See Table 10.

Table 10

Do You Discuss Reading with Your Parents?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 313	No		Yes	
Positive	45	29	112	71
Negative	84	54	72	46

HLE Question 14.

Whether or not parents subscribe to magazines did not appear to be a significant influence on the scoring patterns of their children on the attitude survey.

HLE Question 15.

Subjects who currently have subscriptions to periodicals did not score significantly higher on the reading attitude survey than those who did not.

HLE Question 16

Chi-square findings for the relationship between having had subscriptions to magazines when young and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 18.16$, df $= 1$). Sixty-nine percent (69%) of those who had positive attitudes reported having had subscriptions to magazines as a child compared to 45% who had negative attitudes (see Table 11).

Table 11

Did You Subscribe to Magazines as a Child?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 315	No		Yes	
Positive	49	31	109	69
Negative	86	55	71	45

HLE Question 17.

There was no relationship between having a newspaper come to the home on a regular basis and having a positive attitude toward reading.

HLE Question 18.

Chi-square findings for the relationship between having friends who read and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 9.37$, df =1). See Table 12.

Table 12

Do Your Friends Like to Read?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 307	No		Yes	
Positive	27	17	127	83
Negative	50	33	103	67

HLE Question 19.

Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents with positive attitudes said they discussed reading with their friends compared to 26% of those with negative attitudes. Chi-square findings for the relationship between discussing reading with friends and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 45.13$, df = 1). See Table 13.

Table 13

Do You Discuss Reading with Your Friends?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 312	No		Yes	
Positive	56	36	101	64
Negative	114	74	41	26

HLE Question 20.

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents with positive attitudes confessed that they and their friends recommend books to one another. Chi-square findings for the relationship between recommending books and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level ($x^2 = 36.62$, df = 1). See Table 14.

Table 14

Do You and Your Friends
Recommend Books to One Another?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 314	No		Yes	
Positive	64	41	93	59
Negative	119	76	38	24

HLE Question 21.

There is a relationship between having had TV programs and/or viewing time restricted when young and having a positive attitude toward reading. Chi-square findings for the relationship were significant at the .05 level ($x^2 = 4.10$, df = 1). See Table 15.

Table 15

Did Parents Restrict TV When You Were Young?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 314	No		Yes	
Positive	106	68	51	32
Negative	122	78	35	22

HLE Question 22.

Chi-square findings for the relationship between having TV shows or viewing time restricted now and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .05 level ($x^2 = 5.87$, df =1). See Table 16.

Table 16

Do Parents Restrict TV Viewing Now?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 314	No		Yes	
Positive	136	86	22	14
Negative	147	94	9	6

HLE Question 23.

There was no apparent relationship between how many children there were in the respondents' families and whether or not they placed above or below the median on the attitude scale.

HLE Question 24.

Ordinal position in the family and whether or not subjects placed above the median on the attitude scale were apparently not related.

HLE Question 25

The results from this study did not support the expected relationship between parental educational attainment levels and positive attitudes toward reading.

HLE Question 26

There was no apparent relationship between the presence in the family of a person or persons the respondent considered a real "reader" and the respondent's score on the attitude scale.

HLE Question 27

The students with positive attitudes toward reading reported a significantly higher number of periodical subscriptions currently coming to their parents ($\underline{M}$ = 1.94) than did the negative attitude group ($\underline{M}$ = 1.45), t (313) = 2.60, $p < .03$.

HLE Question 28

The students with positive attitudes reported a significantly higher number of current subscription for themselves ($\underline{M}$ = 1.17) than did students with negative attitudes toward reading ($\underline{M}$ = .85), t (314) = 2.62, $p < .01$.

HLE Question 29

The students with positive attitudes toward reading remembered receiving a significantly higher number of magazines as a child ($\underline{M}$ = 1.12) than did their negative attitude classmates ($\underline{M}$ = .63), t (313) = 4.17, $p < .01$.

HLE Question 30

Chi-square findings for the relationship between answering this subjective question and having a positive attitude toward reading were significant at the .01 level (x^2 = 36.5, $\underline{df}$ = 1). See Table 17.

Table 17

Was There an Incident or Person
Who Influenced You?

Group	F	%	F	%
N = 316	No		Yes	
Positive	82	52	77	48
Negative	131	83	26	17

CHAPTER 5

Discussion and Conclusions

This study sought to find significant relationships between the home literary environment of ninth-grade students and their attitudes toward reading. Many interesting relationships were found.

Findings

-There was a relationship between being read to as a child and having a positive attitude toward reading. Although it was not significant who read to the child, there was a relationship between being read to by more than one person and having a positive score on the attitude scale.

-There was no apparent relationship between whether or not a primary caregiver worked and a positive attitude toward reading.

-Having visited the public library as a preschooler related significantly to having a positive attitude toward reading. In addition, students with scores above the median on the attitude scale were more likely to possess a library card than were those students who scored below the median.

-Giving books as gifts, having parents with book collections, and having a personal collection of books all characterized students with positive attitudes toward reading.

-Parental questioning about school and reading were not related to positive attitudes toward reading in their children.

-Discussing books or magazine articles with parents was characteristic of students with positive attitudes toward reading.

-There was no relationship between having subscriptions to newspapers and magazines and positive attitudes toward reading. There were, however, more magazines coming to the homes of those with positive attitudes toward reading.

-There was a relationship between having had subscriptions to one or more children's magazines as a young child and having a positive attitude toward reading.

-More students with positive attitudes toward reading had friends who shared their interest in books than students with negative attitudes had. Students with positive attitudes also discussed books and reading with their friends and recommended books to one another.

-Having had restrictions placed on either the television shows watched or the amount of time spent viewing television both as small children and as young adults was characteristic of students with positive attitudes.

-There was no relationship between the number of children in the family and attitudes toward reading, nor did there seem to be a relationship between ordinal position in the family and reading attitudes.

-There was no apparent relationship between parental educational attainment and student attitudes toward reading.

-The identification of a family member as a "reader" did not appear to have had an effect on positive attitude formation.

-The families of students with positive attitudes toward reading currently receive 34% more magazines than the families of those with negative attitudes.

-Students with positive attitudes toward reading personally receive 38% more magazines than those who have negative attitudes.

-Students with positive attitudes received 78% more magazines as young children than those who have negative attitudes toward reading.

-Students with positive attitudes could attribute their feelings about reading to a significant event or person; students scoring below the median on the attitude scale generally did not attribute their present attitudes to any event or person.

Discussion

> *Children who are not spoken to by live and responsive adults will not learn to speak properly. Children who are not answered will stop asking questions. They will become incurious. And children who are not told stories and who are not read to will have few reasons for wanting to learn to read* (Haley in Trelease, 1985, p. 14).

This study corroborated the findings of earlier studies (Maring, 1985; Vukelich, 1984; Martin, 1991; Greaney, 1986; Karazim, 1987; Freeman & Wasserman, 1987; and others) in regard to the importance of the preschool environment. However, this study broadened the concept of "environment" as defined by previous studies in that it considered the past and present influences of the home and added the all-important influence of peers.

The majority of ninth-graders reported that they had been read to as small children, but the amount of reading reported was greater for those students who had positive attitudes. Students with positive attitudes also reported that other people read to them as well, not just their mothers, indicating, perhaps, more family involvement in reading, though it is impossible to tell from the responses.

Models for young people exert their influence as definers of the roles that the young people someday expect to play (Woelfel & Haller, 1971). When children see adults with whom they identify reading, they assume that they will also read when they are adults. The importance of home and family was reflected in the comments written by students in response to question 30 on the HLE survey; 64 of the 101 responses directly credited either mom (28), the family (21), dad (8), or grandparents (7) with having been a significant positive influence on them. The following comments suggest a pull toward two groups of significant others: "My dad and uncles read thick action / adventure / mystery fiction books which I love. My friends and I also like romance novels." Another respondent wrote: "Almost all the lady [sic] in my family read a lot. So, I read sometime [sic] with them." The students' responses to question 30 may be found in Appendix C.

Father failed to emerge as an important influence on the attitudes toward reading of the children in this study, perhaps because of the number of one-parent households in the area of the study (see Appendix D). Research has suggested that the role of the father could, in fact, be more important than that of the mother in the formation of positive attitudes toward reading (Freeman &

Wasserman, 1987), especially in boys (Karazim, 1987; Landy, 1977), but the trend is obvious: mom reads to the children.

A preponderance of families headed by women could be detrimental to the reading development of young boys. Many boys believe that reading is a feminine activity (Athey, 1976) and, consequently, a behavior they do not wish to emulate. In homes headed by women, the lack of a male reading model further increases the probability that the male children will not become good readers. This is an important area in need of further research.

Over two-thirds of all the students surveyed reported visiting the library when they were young although the greater number of them fell into the group which exhibited positive attitudes. A student wrote: "My grandmother [was a significant influence on my reading attitude] because she always took me to the public library."

The value of the library in helping to form positive attitudes toward reading cannot be overstated (Duggins, 1989). It has long been known that library members read more (Greaney & Hegarty, 1987) and that children of library users become library users themselves (Hansen, 1976).

In her study of elementary school students, Landy (1977) reported that library usage is an important discriminator between readers and nonreaders. Because nonreaders as a group were more aware of outside influences than readers, however, she felt the library had a greater potential to influence them through library-sponsored programs and personal contact with the librarian than it did readers. Matheny and Lockledge (1986) agree that appropriate strategies

for improving attitudes can make a bigger difference in the attitude of the nonreader.

Surprisingly, almost two-thirds of the students who had negative attitudes toward reading reported having their own library cards. While the percentage seems high, it may be because of school assignments which require library resources or because the area of the study is served by several branch libraries, staffed by professional librarians, who work with the schools to encourage library use. It is not uncommon for high school media specialists to distribute library card applications to ninth-graders so that they may easily obtain cards of their own.

The relationship between having home libraries, giving books as gifts, and having positive attitudes toward reading was strong in the students surveyed. Children who liked to read were far more likely to get and give books as gifts (Landy, 1977) and begin collections of treasured books and periodicals of their own. One student wrote: "My older sister really got me interested in books. She gave me my first book ever, which I still have today."

While a positive reply to the questions about newspaper and magazine subscriptions did not relate to a positive attitude toward reading, a request later in the HLE Survey to list the number of magazines and titles the family currently receives exposed the following: the parents of the positive attitude students currently receive about one-third more magazines than the parents of the negative attitude students do. Similarly, students in the positive group

currently receive over one-third more personal magazines than their negative attitude counterparts.

Parental subscriptions to one or more children's magazines for their preschooler or elementary school child appear to have made a significant impact on positive attitude formation. Young children feel important when they receive mail; subscribing to magazines for children allows them to model adult behavior while reinforcing the importance and delight of reading. Magazines, especially those which address the child's interests and age level, are a popular addition to any home library. Study results show that students with positive attitudes toward reading received almost twice as many magazines when they were young than students with negative attitudes received.

While the amount of leisure reading may be related to a positive educational environment in the home and especially to the value placed on reading (Greaney & Hegarty, 1987), peer relationships and group memberships exert a great deal of influence on adolescent readers as well (Duggins, 1984) and was evident in the following student responses: "My two friends Jessica & Keisha [are significant] because they read books all the time & I just started reading with them," and "My best friend gave me a bunch of books when I was sick." While these young people speak of positive peer pressure and the statistics corroborate the reinforcement that readers get from their reading friends, one cannot always count on peers to be a positive influence.

Peer relationships may significantly diminish the amount of reading a teenager engages in (Duggins, 1984; Greaney & Hegarty, 1987). While

students who are readers have friends who read, they also have friends who do not (Steltenkamp, 1992). A substantial majority of the students with positive attitudes reported having friends who read, but so did a smaller majority of students with negative attitudes, suggesting that the friends a child chooses can be varied and chosen for widely different reasons.

Leisure reading tends to be sporadic with teens, depending on the availability of material to read, current interests and friendships, the weather, the time of the year, the amount of homework, and other influences (Greaney & Hegarty, 1987). While students who derive a great deal of pleasure from reading may make time to read, many others, even those with good attitudes toward reading, may not. Whittemore (1992), who surveyed 449 high school seniors and sophomores about their reading habits and interests, found that almost three-quarters of them expressed a desire to read, even though they might not currently be readers, and planned to read more after graduation.

Although very few researchers have addressed television's effect on reading attitudes, several have investigated its effect on achievement but with inconclusive results. In this study, one-third of the students with positive attitudes reported that their parents restricted their television viewing time or the shows they watched when they were young compared to about one-fifth of the negative group. Far fewer from both groups still have television access restricted by parents. Whether the restrictions are intended to make time for more important pursuits (like homework, family time, practice or reading) or are, in fact, simply because parents don't want their children watching so much

television due to the medium itself would be interesting to determine. It is a subject for further research.

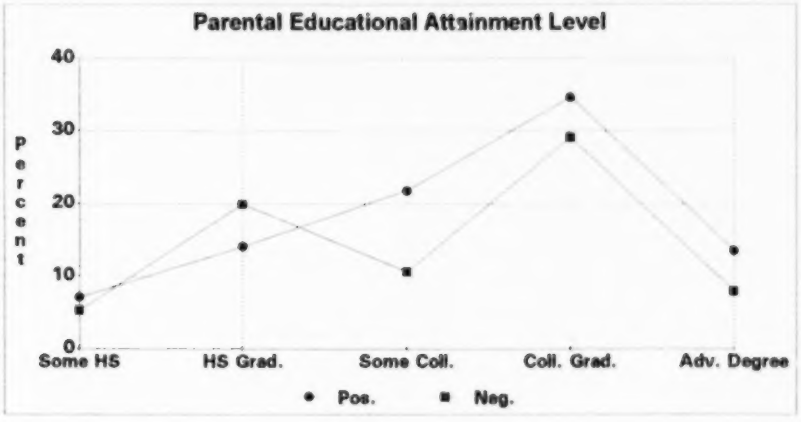
Smith reported that adults with the most education had the most positive attitudes toward reading (1990); Sheldon and Carillo (1951), Greaney (1986) and others have found that good readers come from homes where parents have reached higher levels of educational attainment. In view of fairly conclusive existing research, one must examine the results of this question closely.

Fifty-five respondents did not know their primary caregiver's level of educational attainment (9% of the positive group and 27% of the negative group) and seven students chose not to answer the question. Together these responses comprised slightly over one-fifth of the total responses.

The percentage of parents who were college graduates reported by the students at school Y is almost two and one-third times higher than the percentage of adults with a college degree recorded in the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau demographic data for the area (see Appendix D). At school X, the percentage of parental college graduates was about one-fifth higher than census data would lead one to expect.

While it is possible that the parents of the ninth-graders in this study may have achieved a higher level of education than census data would lead one to believe, the student responses to question 25 require further investigation before being accepted as valid. See Figure 1.

Figure 1.



Steltenkamp (1992) found that many people with positive attitudes toward reading could identify a turning point or influential person to whom they attribute or with whom they associate their good feelings about reading. Their comments were consistently positive and often involved a family member or teacher. This study's findings are similar to Steltenkamp's and the students' replies to question 30 may be found in Appendix C.

Applications

> *It is the task of parents and the school to help make encounters with print satisfying and pleasurable, thereby introducing the young person to a new world of adventure and ideas which can both illuminate and change his or her future life* (Greaney, 1986, p. 817).

Parents must be told of their importance in determining the future academic success of their children. It is no longer enough for parents to provide a roof over their heads and food on the table to have happy, healthy, well-adjusted children. The agrarian roots of success have withered and died. Today things are different.

Hospitals give courses on physical child care to new mothers; they must also give "intellectual" child care instruction. Visiting instructors, videos, or some other means of acquainting patients with the basics of raising a literate child must be made available. A young mother needs to leave the hospital armed with a knowledge of programs and a list of supporters to whom she can turn for assistance in raising a literate child, especially if she, herself, is illiterate.

The community must take over from the hospital and provide the knowledge and support necessary to encourage family involvement in the lives of its children. Home needs to be a positive, reinforcing, nurturing haven for its youngest members. Disadvantaged families need to know that they need not have volumes of books and piles of magazines of their own to provide the

enrichment that is necessary. They need not even be literate themselves: the public library is available.

Funding for public library staffing and materials needs to be increased, especially in areas where disadvantaged families are dependent on the library for resources. Hours of operation need to be extended so that working parents can take their families to the library. The library needs to be the literate connection between the neighborhoods and the schools.

Preschool programs should enliven social experience and provide interaction with other adults and groups of children of similar ages. Academic programs which intentionally teach skills are not appropriate for preschoolers (Elkind, 1987) and can, in fact, do damage to their social and academic growth. Play, both structured and unstructured, and exposure to a wide variety of good literature, has a very important part in the formation of positive attitudes and will equip children to do well when they begin school.

Schools need to immerse their new students in good literature from starting bell to dismissal. If, through lack of exposure to enriching literature, children have no desire to decode the squiggles on a page, they will have a difficult time learning to read. If they fall behind, low ability readers need help to maintain positive attitudes toward reading.

Parents and the public library must not be left behind when children begin formal schooling. Weekend and after-school library programs must be available and must grow and expand with the needs and experiences of the children. Students must be encouraged to remain patrons of the library and regular participants in its programs and services.

> *With the tests, with the "methods," with the class structures, with the teacher's determination to teach . . . no one ever had much time in school to just read the damn books. They were always practicing up to read, and the practice itself was so unnecessary, or so difficult, or so boring you were likely to figure that the task you were practicing for must combine those qualities and so reject it or be afraid of it* (Herndon in Trelease, 1985, p. 111).

Although teachers of elementary school children rated attitude second only to comprehension in importance, they devoted more time to every other aspect of reading than fostering positive attitudes. They seem to be unaware that scales to measure attitude toward reading exist and think that improving skills will improve a student's attitude (Heathington & Alexander, 1984). Attitude measurement must have an important place in school testing programs.

Young-adult as well as children's librarians must be funded positions in libraries in disadvantaged areas. Both need to be organizers, planners, good-book selectors, book-talkers, and literacy champions; they need to be visitors at and partners with the schools the neighborhood children attend; and they need to involve parents in programs that parallel those provided for their children.

If students have not responded to previous efforts to involve them in reading, there is still hope. Parents, teachers and librarians all have the potential for changing the attitudes of young nonreaders. Case studies show that changes can always be made under the right set of circumstances. Landy reported the "exciting finding that not only do children frequently defy

expectations, but that often they change their reading habits which may appear to have been established during the early formative years (1977, p. 292)."

When caring adults make an effort to affect change, they are often successful. According to Smith (1990), the positive attitudes in reading that are fostered during the later school years will stay. The effort is worth the outcome.

> *I have one of [Frank Packard's Gray Seal] novels put away in my basement, along with copies of about six Tom Swift books, and all of Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan and John Carter of Mars books. Not a classic among them. And yet, if I am not part jungle hero, Martian adventurer, cohort of L. Frank Baum and friend to Tom Swift, I am nothing. Shakespeare was to come later, with his friend G. B. Shaw. But my love of them was nothing to the mad love I had for Tantor the elephant or Kala the Ape. Oh, keeper of the Gray Seal, where are you now that we need you* (Bradbury in Trelease, 1989, p. 86)?

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

READING ATTITUDE SCALE
Part A

How do you feel about these statements? Please circle your answers.

A = strongly agree
B = agree
C = undecided
D = disagree
E = strongly disagree

1. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment.	A	B	C	D	E
2. Money spent on books is well spent.	A	B	C	D	E
3. There is nothing to be gained from reading books.	A	B	C	D	E
4. Books are a bore.	A	B	C	D	E
5. Reading is a good way to spend spare time.	A	B	C	D	E
6. Sharing books in class is a waste of time.	A	B	C	D	E
7. Reading is great!	A	B	C	D	E
8. Reading is only for kids who will do anything to get good grades.	A	B	C	D	E
9. Books aren't usually good enough to finish.	A	B	C	D	E
10. Reading is rewarding to me.	A	B	C	D	E
11. Reading becomes boring after about an hour.	A	B	C	D	E
12. Most books are too long and dull.	A	B	C	D	E
13. Free reading doesn't teach you anything.	A	B	C	D	E
14. There should be more time for free reading during the day.	A	B	C	D	E
15. There are many books which I hope to read.	A	B	C	D	E
16. Books should not be read except for class requirements.	A	B	C	D	E

A = strongly agree
B = agree
C = undecided
D = disagree
E = strongly disagree

17. Reading is something I can do without.	A	B	C	D	E
18. A certain amount of summer vacation should be set aside for reading.	A	B	C	D	E
19. Books make good presents.	A	B	C	D	E
20. Reading is dull.	A	B	C	D	E

Literary Environment Survey
Part B

Please answer the following questions by circling the best answer.

1. Did your parent(s) or guardian(s) read to you when you were a young child?

   a. Never b. Sometimes c. Often

2. Who was the person who read to you the most?

   Female parent or guardian Male parent or guardian Older brother or sister

   Grandparent Other: _____

3. Did more than one person read to you on a regular basis?	Yes	No
4. Did your primary care-giver work outside the home before you began kindergarten?	Yes	No
5. Did you visit the public library when you were young?	Yes	No
6. Did you attend story hours or other programs at the public library?	Yes	No
7. Do you presently have a public library card?	Yes	No

8. Do you and your family members give each other books as gifts? Yes No

9. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a collection of books they own at home? Yes No

10. Do you have a library of your own books at home? Yes No

11. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) show interest in what you read? Yes No

12. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) often ask you what you learned in school? Yes No

13. Do you ever discuss books or magazine articles with your parent(s) or guardian(s)? Yes No

14. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) subscribe to magazines which are mailed to your home? If they do, please list the titles at the end of this survey. Yes No

15. Do you have your own magazine subscriptions? Yes No
If you answered yes, please list the titles at the end of the survey.

16. Do you remember having magazine subscriptions as a child? Yes No
If you do, please list what you can remember of them at the end of this survey.

17. Is there a newspaper coming to your home on a daily basis? Yes No

18. Do your friends like to read books and/or magazines? Yes No

19. Do you discuss books you've read with your friends? Yes No

20. Do you and your friends recommend good books to each other? Yes No

21. Did your parent(s) or guardian(s) restrict the number of viewing hours or the shows you watched on TV when you were young? Yes No

22. Do your parent(s) or guardian(s) restrict the number of hours or the TV shows you watch now? Yes No

23. How many children are there in your family?

I'm an only child 2 3 4 5 6 or more

24. In order of birth, which number child are you?

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th or later

25. What is the educational level of the parent or guardian with whom you spent the most time when you were a preschooler?

Some high school High school graduate Some College

College graduate Advanced degree I don't know

26. Was (is) there someone in your family whom you considered a real "reader," someone who seemed to be reading at every free moment?

Female parent or guardian Male parent or guardian Neither Both

Other: _____

27. Number of subscriptions currently coming to your house for your parent(s) or guardians(s): _____
Please name those you can remember or describe them.

1.

2.

3.

4.

28. Magazines you currently receive:

1.

2.

3.

29. Magazine(s) you remember receiving as a child: (Describe them if you can't recall titles.)

1. 2.

3. 4.

30. If you can think of one person who or one incident which had a very big effect on the type of reader you are today, please tell me about it in a few words or sentences.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

Mary Ellen Kubis
Media Specialist

APPENDIX B

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION SCRIPT

Please read this to your students.

"This is a survey to determine your attitude toward reading and some factors which may have influenced your attitude. It is an anonymous survey and will have absolutely no bearing on your grade in this or any class. It is completely voluntary; if you don't want to take it, just leave it on your desk and I'll pick it up after we've begun."

Pass out the survey, please.

"Please don't begin until I've finished reading you the instructions."

"Please read each statement in part A carefully and then circle the letter which most accurately represents how you feel about that statement. Don't study the statements or try to read anything into them, just react to them as they are."

"For part B, please answer each question as accurately as you can. If something doesn't apply to you or you can't remember the answer to a question, just skip it. If your family situation has changed since you were a preschooler, please answer the family questions as they applied to you before you started school."

"The survey has two double-sided sheets; please complete them both. Begin."

Please collect them when the students have finished, complete and attach the cover sheet and return the surveys to either of the library media specialists in the media center.

Thank you very much for your help.

Mary Ellen Kubis

APPENDIX C

Comments

Following are the comments the students wrote in response to the question (#30) which read: "If you can think of one person who or one incident which had a very big effect on the type of reader you are today, please tell me about it in a few words or sentences."

My mother taught me to read when I was two.

My mom because she read it where I could understand everything that was going on.

No one actually, I read books to forget my problems.

My grandmother used to buy me a lot of books and read them to me. She made it seem fun so I began to read on my own. Now I read a lot!

I don't read as much as I would like to, because I don't have time.

My friend let me borrow a Christopher Pike book 1 day & now he's one of my favorite authors. I have a lot of his books.

My mom, dad, and grandfather.

I remember reading books in fifth grade and always falling asleep.

My grandpa recommends most of the books I read.

I think the fact that I have matured has changed the type of books I read.

My mom loves to read and she got me started reading.

Grandparents. Reading is the key to success.

When my stepdad read a book and it's good he will get me to read it.

My grandparents because they have read ever since I was little. I have grown up with books.

My father was a real motivation to me with my reading.

My sister reads alot and she's the one who got me started.

Well, to much T.V. & not enough reading as a child. Also to much playing outside.

Stephen King, weird movies. I don't read his books but some like him.

My stepdad always goes out and buys me books or gives me money to spend on them.

My mother read to me very often, and encouraged me to read books. Daily we would spend time together and read.

My best friend gave me a bunch of books when I was sick.

My mom reads all the time!

My dad always reads and that could be one reason why I read so much now.

Almost all the lady in my family read a lot. So, I read sometime with them.

My mom. She reads all the time. I usually read what she reads homicides ect. She was recently told she's used her card more than anyone with the exception of two people.

My sister that always reads.

My mom who always told me to read when I was bored.

My mom. She taught me & read to me when I was younger.

My loving grandmother and mom.

Terry McMillan.

I learned to read when I was 3 because my mom & dad & sister read to me & taught me to read. (I taught myself to read.)

My family encouraging me to & sibling competition to be smart.

My whole family used to tell me that I was so smart when I was little. My 1st and favorite song "Inch Worm." My grandparents especially my grandfather used to read to me. They say that before I was 2 I used to try to read a book, but the book was upside down.

I effected my own reading. When I was young I was always ready to read anything.

[My teacher], I like the books but hers tests make me hate them.

My mom has encourage me to read.

My mom always told me I could stay up after my bedtime if I sat in bed & read.

We always go to the library & the book store together & we have a good time.

I went to Pre-1st because my birthdate was past the cut off date. It advanced me in many areas including reading & liking to read.

My dad was a jerk.

Parents read to me a lot.

I read a book that I couldn't put down, and that made me love books.

My mom has many bookcases at home full of novels. She's never not reading.

Once I got in [a teacher's] class, I realized that I couldn't just skim over a book and take her test. You actually had to know what happens in the book.

My mom loves to read and I like to read w/her or something she has read so that we can discuss it.

I had a book called Noisy Nora when I was two, and I could recite the book word for word after only a few times of hearing it. I even turned the pgs at the right times. This became a habit. I always remember the books I read.

My dad and uncles read thick action/adventure/mystery fiction books which I love. My friends and I also like romance novels.

When I was 8 one of my poems was published. My mom reads a lot so I read her books when she's done.

My mother because always read to me as a child and got me hooked on reading.

Reading sux!!!!

My mother read constantly to herself and me and I was taught that reading was fun.

My Dad's a constant reader, work stuff and magazines. He doesn't read novels though, only important stuff.

I read because I enjoy it, not because my mom read to me as a child.

My best friend, she reads all the time.

I really don't like to read but my grandmom likes me to read.

When I was younger and even now my grandmother has allways read to me and says it good to read cause it brightens and widens the imagination.

Hello no.

My 6th grade science teacher--she got me interested in environment. My 5 grade teacher--got me interested in history.

Get sick when I try to read in car & don't have really any other time to read.

Through all my school years, anytime we have read books or anything I have gotten **very** boerd.

My dad always telling me to read so I'll know more than what I know now.

My old babysitter who gave me all her old books to keep & read.

My two friends Jessica & Keisha because they read books all the time & I just started reading with them.

When my mother said reading will help you more in life.

My sister, because she started reading at an early age so she used to read to me often.

I read time enough for drums in the 6th grade and fell in love w/historical romance.

My mother reads a lot so I guess I inherited it from her.

My uncle.

Both my mother and father read a lot. My brother does not.

Animal Farm! (*This student's attitude score was 43.*)

Stephen King because he, I think, is such a creative writer which I plan to be someday.

My mom.

My dad was allwas incuring me to read.

My brother got me into horror & heavy metal.

I think my mom did. She always helped me with my reading.

I just enjoy funny books.

I hate books!!!!

My mom.

I just remember that the kinds of books I was being read when I was younger were very exciting and very mythical. Now, I like to read those kinds of books.

My mother and father both read to me all the time.

My mom used to always read. I picked up the habit and now read more than her. I always have my nose stuck in a book.

Parents read to me a lot when I was little & got me excited about learning to read.

I can only say both my parents affected my by buying & reading books for me, and by having books around the house for all to enjoy.

My sisters reading books when I was younger.

My older sister really got me interested in books. She gave me my first book ever, which I still have today.

My parents always made reading seem fun.

My mother got me interested in books by reading to me often.

In the first grade I finished a 200 page book in 2 days. My father was impressed. All of my family are speed readers. We can read fast, but we don't skim.

My parents.

Friend read Clear & Preasent Danger.

Stephen King.

I think that one incident that had a very big effect on my reading was when I was about 10. My mother read The Hobbit series by J. R. Tolkien.

My mom did. She reads a lot of things. She is pretty cool.

Grandma.

My father used to read me many poems. I used to learn new words with each poem, and I practiced memorization naturally.

My parents getting me my first Stephen King book got me reading.

My grandmother because she always took me to the public library.

My mom always read to me as a child.

My parents forced me to read when I was little and I hate to read now.

My dad because he always makes me read.

My 3rd grade teacher [name] and my target teacher [name] were two who encouraged me to read.

T. V.

Mom used to read to me before bed.

My mom read to me often.

APPENDIX D
SCHOOL X

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Neighborhood Profile

Work And Wealth

	Your Neighborhood	County	5-County Metro Area
Average home value, 1990:	$104,470.71	$118,448.56	$120,472.00
% Change in home value, 1980-1990:	78.74	102.41	113.33
Average family income, 1990:	$56,876.14	$56,539.37	$53,016.00
% Residents below poverty level:	2.47	5.64	5.64
% of adults with college degree:	29.33	32.98	30.51
% workers w/managerial or professional jobs:	40.46	33.77	31.46
Average daily commute, one way, in minutes:	30.15	26.94	25.62

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Tract 303.12

Who Lives Here

	Your Neighborhood	County	5-County Metro Area
% of households with children:	46.12	37.76	36.63
% of homes with 2 or more workers:	75.17	69.30	65.65
Single person households:	12.32	22.50	24.89
% of residents under 18:	28.30	25.29	25.24
% of residents 65 and older:	5.29	6.31	7.66
% of adults who were born outside of Ga.:	65.89	56.18	48.96

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Tract 303.12

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Neighborhood Profile

[redacted]

	Your Neighborhood	County	5-County Metro Area
Average home value, 1990:	$74,682.80	$118,448.56	$120,472.00
% Change in home value, 1980-1990:	84.12	102.41	113.33
Average family income, 1990:	$40,825.14	$56,539.37	$53,016.00
% Residents below poverty level:	5.89	5.64	5.64
% of adults with college degree:	12.71	32.98	30.51
% workers w/managerial or professional jobs:	18.99	33.77	31.46
Average daily commute, one way, in minutes:	27.06	26.94	25.62

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Tract 313.04

[redacted]

	Your Neighborhood	County	5-County Metro Area
% of households with children:	36.61	37.76	36.63
% of homes with 2 or more workers:	67.84	69.30	65.65
Single person households:	19.23	22.50	24.89
% of residents under 18:	24.33	25.29	25.24
% of residents 65 and older:	10.26	6.31	7.66
% of adults who were born outside of Ga.:	29.28	56.18	48.96

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Tract 313.04